When we add to this that a majority of the people of the Northern States regarded the secession of the Cotton States as unquestionably brought about for the purpose of establishing a new Confederacy, of which the institution of slavery should be the distinguishing feature, it is not difficult to see why the North should have entered into the war with a clear conscience. Not that the war was waged by the North for the purpose of abolishing slavery in the South; that was certainly not the case; the war was prosecuted to put down all resistance to the National Government; but the fact that these inadmissible claims to independence were set up by communities which professed devotion to the institution of slavery, a system repugnant to the enlightenment and humanity of the age, drew to the Union Hide the moral approval of the great mass of the Northern people.

While this moral sentiment in regard to slavery strongly reinforced the patriotic determination of the Northern people, their opponents derived strength and courage from their belief that the war waged against them was an unjust and unprovoked war; they had, they maintained, a perfect right to leave the Union ; they had done so; and now they were attacked and invaded; they were perfectly right in

defending themselves.

Such, in a few words, were the positions of the conflicting parties at the outbreak of the war. Much more certainly might be said ; but we have here meu-

[1] "This stone [the subordination of the inferior race] * is become the chief of the corner '—the real ' corner-stone '—in our new edifice."
Speech of Vice-President Stephens, March 21, 1861. a, Stephens, 85, 86.